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Rebuttal of British Veterinary Association Policy Brief

When vets unwittingly, accidentally injure the patients under their care it's regrettable but, because vets are human, it's mostly forgivable. When vets conspire with the manufacturers of junk food to promote the mass consumption of products known to maim and kill a majority of the world's pets then forgiveness is no longer an option.

The organisations:

The British Veterinary Association (BVA) is the main UK veterinary association with over 10,000 members

<http://www.bva.co.uk/>

The British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) claims to 'foster high scientific and educational standards of small animal medicine and surgery in practice, teaching and research.' and represents over 5,500 members <http://www.bsava.com/>

The Pet Food Manufacturers' Association (PFMA) represents 50 small, medium and giant junk pet-food companies doing business in the UK:

<http://www.pfma.com/public/welcome.htm>

BVA Policy Brief

Raw Meaty Bones Lobby

An ongoing debate within the veterinary profession.

False: Apathy rules within the veterinary profession and the veterinary authorities censor and suppress attempts to raise awareness of the junk pet-food scam.

A small lobby group proposes that pet dogs and cats should be fed a 'natural diet' of raw meat and bones rather than commercially prepared diets. The

group is active in their criticism of the commercial manufacturers of pet foods.

True: The UKRMB Support and Action Group www.ukrmb.co.uk promotes the feeding of a diet based on whole carcasses or raw, meaty bones and a few table scraps. UKRMB accuses the junk pet-food industry of producing products that injure the health of a majority of the world's pets.

This criticism has recently been extended to the university veterinary schools, which have been accused of teaching undergraduate veterinary nutrition in a biased fashion in return for financial support for research and clinical work within the schools.

True: It's a £multi-million scandal. The vet schools are propped up by junk pet-food company funds; they grovel to the companies; teach from company produced text books and consciously, deliberately exclude the provision of natural dietary information. Young vets emerge from the vet schools brimful of counterfeit science, clueless about natural feeding but well versed in junk pet-food company factoids and falsehoods.

Key facts: Pet food industry inspired factoids and falsehoods

- Dogs are omnivorous animals

False: Dogs are carnivores like their wolf ancestors.

whilst cats are obligate carnivores.

True: That's why cats catch birds and small mammals — unless forced to consume cooked, pulverized grain.

Both species require a balance of essential dietary nutrients (e.g. vitamins, minerals and essential fatty acids) for optimal health and longevity.

Pseudoscientific gobbledegook: Air, water and food are all *essential* and well defined and provided for by nature.

- Commercially prepared pet foods have been scientifically formulated to contain the optimum balance of essential dietary nutrients for each species.

False: Companies formulate their products to maximize profits and to minimize or disguise the adverse health consequences. Nature determines the optimum balance of essential nutrients.

Some commercial pet foods have been designed to satisfy the requirements of specific breeds or the specialised dietary needs of animals with a range of illnesses.

Marketing scam: Should be investigated.

The use of such diets over the past decades likely accounts for the increased health and longevity of companion animals.

False and absurd. No evidence that there is increased longevity (save for the control of infectious diseases). Junk food known to impair health and shorten life.

- These commercial diets are based on extensive research, performed both ‘in-house’ and in collaboration with veterinary schools.

True: Veterinary profession little more than R&D and marketing arm of the junk pet-food industry.

Much of this research is published in the peer-reviewed scientific literature.

Disinformation: The ‘scientific’ journals are crammed with biased research endorsed by the anonymous peer-review process that the Editor of the *Lancet*, Richard Horton, labeled: ‘Biased, unjust, unaccountable, incomplete, easily fixed, often insulting, usually ignorant, occasionally foolish and frequently wrong.’

Journal peer reviewers don’t sign their reviews; they operate in secrecy, and the so called scientists, whose papers are reviewed, mostly come from the same pool of pet-food company servants.

By contrast, there is no scientific evidence base to support the benefits of feeding raw meat and bones.

False: The medical, dental and veterinary literature is replete with hard scientific evidence. Common sense and common experience confirm that Nature got it right. *Raw Meaty Bones: Promote Health* comprises 389 pages of referenced evidence, fully endorsed by five veterinary peer-reviewers who signed their reviews.

- Dogs and cats may be fed with home-prepared ‘natural diets’, but it is difficult to achieve the optimum balance of requisite nutrients in this fashion.

Egregious nonsense: Dogs and cats have been fed by humans for thousands of years. The junk pet-food industry is less than 150 years old.

- The feeding of raw meat and bones to companion animals carries particular risks, including infection with pathogenic bacteria associated with uncooked meats (e.g. Salmonella, Campylobacter) and injury (e.g. intestinal perforation) caused by bone fragments.

Scaremongering disinformation: Negligible risks compared with the widespread ill health and injury associated with junk foods. (See *Raw Meaty Bones*)

The BSAVA (the BVA’s relevant specialist division) advises against the feeding of raw meat or bones to companion animals for this reason.

Disgraceful: The BSAVA should be investigated.

- The RMB lobby proposes that the feeding of bones is beneficial to oral health (teeth and gums).

True: Raw meaty bones are essential for oral health and to ward off many fatal diseases.

Similar benefits may be achieved by feeding of purpose designed kibble food or dental chews, without the attendant risk of damage (e.g. fractures) of the teeth.

False: Reckless scaremongering and commercially inspired disinformation.

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Disgraceful: The BVA, BSAVA and PFMA should be investigated by several arms of government.

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Disgraceful: Why are the BVA, BSAVA and PFMA so desperate to present their disinformation day and night? Who pays for this outrage?

Additional Resources

- Pet Food Manufacturers Association Information Paper on Raw Meat and Bones Discussions. PFMA, January 2005.

Disgraceful: The PFMA calls the tune; the BVA and BSAVA march in step singing in harmony.

What about the animals? When will this cruel alliance be made accountable?